Premises, Facilities & Property Maintenance Policy

Creative Makers CIC
Witham Friary Quarry provision

1. Overview

Creative Makers CIC uses agreed areas at Witham Friary Quarry for small-group and 1:1 outdoor and creative learning during school hours. Provision may include woodwork, Design and Technology, gardening, land care, outdoor cooking, supervised fires, creative making and play.

This policy covers the suitability, upkeep and safe use of the quarry learning areas, access routes, welfare facilities, storage and any approved shelters or structures used by the provision. Use is subject to landowner or site-manager permission and the relevant risk assessments.

It must be read alongside the Health & Safety Policy, Master Risk Assessment, quarry site and activity assessments, Lone Working Policy and the quarry Activities, Creative Practice & Learning Environment Policy. Detailed hazards, boundaries and controls are recorded in those assessments.

2. Suitability of Premises

Before sessions take place, the site must provide suitable space, supervision visibility and safe access for the intended learners and activities. The session lead must confirm the following arrangements:

- Clearly defined learning and play areas, with restricted areas kept out of bounds. Quarry edges, unstable ground or rock, water where present, and vehicle routes must be assessed and separated from learner activities as necessary.
- Safe arrival and collection points, clear pedestrian routes, controlled access and a suitable emergency access point. The precise location and arrangements for opening gates must be available to staff.
- Suitable toilet facilities with privacy, handwashing with clean water, soap and drying materials, safe drinking water and arrangements for cleaning and waste disposal.
- Appropriate shelter, rest and quieter spaces, with arrangements for cold, heat, wet clothing and changing weather. Any shelter or structure used must be safe and maintained; cooking or fires must not expose occupants to trapped smoke or fumes.
- Suitable work surfaces and secure storage for tools, fuels and hazardous materials, with designated cooking and fire areas where these activities are authorised.

Facilities and routes must be suitable for individual mobility, sensory, medical and regulation needs. Sessions must be adapted, relocated or cancelled if essential welfare facilities, safe access or appropriate weather protection cannot be provided.

3. Regular Safety Checks

Daily and before each session

- Inspect learning areas, paths, boundaries and any structures for damage, unstable ground, fallen branches, sharp objects or other hazards. Review weather and any changes reported by the landowner or site manager.
- Check safe storage and condition of tools and materials; inspect cooking and fire areas before use and confirm any required fire-control resources are ready.
- Check toilets, handwashing, drinking water, food preparation areas and waste arrangements. Confirm first aid supplies, emergency medication arrangements and reliable communication are available.
- Keep access and evacuation routes clear. At departure, secure equipment and materials, remove waste and confirm any fire is fully extinguished and the area safe.

Weekly while the provision is operating

- Review boundaries, gates, paths, shelter condition, seating and workbench stability; check outdoor hazards and outstanding maintenance actions.
- Check first aid supplies, tool condition and storage, and visually inspect any electrical equipment, leads and connections used on site.

Termly and following significant change

- Review site risk assessments, emergency access, evacuation routes, assembly points and individual evacuation arrangements.
- Review maintenance records and inspection requirements with the landowner or site manager. Arrange competent inspection of trees, structures, ground or rock stability where concerns require specialist judgement.
- Review fire precautions and the inspection, testing and servicing schedule for any alarms, extinguishers or other safety systems provided. Equipment must be checked at the frequency required by its assessment and instructions, not only termly.

Additional checks are required after severe weather, damage, site works or a significant incident. All checks and actions are recorded in the quarry Premises Safety Log.

4. Maintenance Reporting

- Issues are logged and reported promptly to Tom Knee and the relevant landowner or site manager. Urgent hazards are made safe immediately by stopping use, isolating equipment or closing the affected area.
- Urgent safety issues are escalated the same day. An unsafe area or item remains out of use until competent checks confirm that it is safe; the need for a repair must not be treated as permission to continue.
- Specialist contractors are engaged where required. The log records the issue, responsible person, interim controls, target completion date and confirmation of completion. Directors oversee unresolved actions.

5. Equipment Maintenance

Fixed and portable equipment, hand tools, benches, gardening equipment and cooking equipment are checked regularly and before use. Unsafe items are removed immediately and repairs or replacements arranged promptly. Electrical equipment, where used, must be suitable for the conditions, visually inspected and tested where appropriate. Inspection and servicing records are retained; learners do not undertake hazardous maintenance.

6. Outdoor Safety

- Quarry learning areas are checked before use. Activities are risk assessed and supervised throughout, with clear boundaries and staffing suited to the activity and individual needs.
- Gardening and land-care work remain within agreed areas and permissions. Excavation, machinery, climbing, water access or other specialist activities require separate authorisation, assessment and competent supervision.
- Woodwork, fires and cooking take place only in designated, assessed areas with suitable equipment and supervision. Fire use must comply with landowner requirements and current conditions or restrictions.
- Staff monitor weather and ground conditions throughout sessions, maintain communication and know how to obtain emergency help. Unsafe conditions require activities to stop, move or be cancelled.

7. Personal Emergency Evacuation Plans (PEEPs)

Creative Makers CIC recognises that some pupils, staff or visitors may require additional support to reach a safe place in an emergency. Where mobility, sensory profile, medical condition or emotional regulation needs may affect evacuation, a Personal Emergency Evacuation Plan (PEEP) will be developed at placement start or when needs are identified.

For the quarry, PEEPs will:

- Identify individual needs in relation to outdoor terrain, distance, weather, alarm communication and access routes.
- Set out a suitable route and safe meeting point, support or equipment required, and an alternative if the usual route cannot be used.
- Assign responsible staff and cover arrangements, ensuring support for one person does not leave other learners unsupervised.
- Be communicated to relevant staff and reviewed termly or when circumstances change, with appropriate practice of arrangements.

The site emergency plan must identify emergency access and how assistance will be summoned. Where no active PEEPs are required, arrangements remain ready for any newly identified need.

8. Accountability & Oversight

Overall responsibility: Rebecca Knee
Director, Creative Makers CIC

Operational premises oversight: ellen vellacott
Creative Makers CIC

Ellen Vellacott is responsible for conducting or coordinating recorded safety checks, maintaining the quarry Premises Log, reporting and arranging repairs, reviewing site and facilities risk assessments, and ensuring PEEP arrangements are implemented where required.

Responsibilities for the land, structures, services and repairs must be agreed with the landowner or site manager. This does not remove Creative Makers responsibility for safe delivery. Session staff complete pre-use checks and report concerns. Directors review premises safety arrangements termly.

Signed:
Rebecca Knee
Director
Date: 02 March 2026